

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
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USNMR SHAPE
CINCLANT
USLOSACLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 095358

HOLD FOR OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, GW

SUBJECT: SECDEF LETTER TO MOD LEBER

1. WITH CONCURRENCE OF AMBASSADOR, PLEASE PASS TEXT OF
MESSAGE IN PARA 2 TO MOD LEBER FROM SECRETARY BROWN USING
SALUTATION, DEAR GEORG.

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2. BEGIN TEXT: AS I MENTIONED TO YOU IN WASHINGTON, I
HOPE THAT THE NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS WILL AGREE IN MAY TO
LAUNCH A LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM. PRESIDENT CARTER
PROBABLY WILL CALL FOR ONE AT THE NATO SUMMIT.

WE DO NOT SEE ANY NEED FOR AN EXERCISE WHICH REVIEWS THE
THREAT OR NATO STRATEGY, SINCE THOSE SUBJECTS ARE ALREADY

COVERED IN THE NEW MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE AND OTHER NATO DOCUMENTS. RATHER, WE ENVISION BUILDING ON THE MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE TO DEVELOP AN AGREED LONG-TERM PROGRAM DESIGNED TO CARRY IT OUT IN TERMS AS SPECIFIC AND AS PROGRAMMATIC AS WE CAN MAKE THEM.

NEITHER DO WE ENVISAGE A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF ALL NATO REQUIREMENTS, WHICH WOULD DUPLICATE ONGOING NATO FORCE PLANNING. INSTEAD, WE WOULD URGE CONCENTRATING ON A RELATIVELY LIMITED NUMBER OF HIGH PRIORITY PROBLEM AREAS

WHERE COLLECTIVE ACTION IS URGENTLY REQUIRED. OUR OWN IDEAS OF THESE PRIORITY AREAS COINCIDE CLOSELY WITH SACEUR'S PRIORITIES SUCH AS HIS "READINESS, REINFORCEMENT, AND RATIONALIZATION," COLLECTIVE COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS; ELECTRONIC WARFARE; LOGISTICS; AND INTEROPERABILITY AND STANDARDIZATION.

MY HOPE IS THAT SUCH AN EXERCISE WOULD RESULT IN A HIGHLY USEFUL COMMON BLUEPRINT FOR MEETING NATO NEEDS IN THESE AREAS OVER THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS, WITH COMMON PROGRAMS AND NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS CAREFULLY SPELLED OUT. THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES, ESPECIALLY SACEUR AND SACLANT, WOULD PLAY MAJOR ROLES IN THIS EXERCISE, PROVIDING THE MILITARY VIEW OF WHAT IS NEEDED IN EACH PRIORITY AREA. THEN NATO'S CIVIL MACHINERY WOULD ADDRESS THESE NEEDS IN TERMS OF HOW BEST TO MEET THEM WITHIN LIKELY FISCAL CONSTRAINTS. THE AIM WOULD BE TO DEVELOP A SERIES OF PROGRAM PACKAGES WHICH WOULD PROVIDE

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DPC MINISTERS WITH IMPROVED MEANS OF FOCUSING COLLECTIVELY ON SPECIFIC HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS.

TWO OTHER ISSUES THAT OUGHT TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS LONG-TERM PLAN WOULD BE HOW TO ACHIEVE IN PRACTICE THE GREATER ALLIANCE COOPERATION MANDATED BY THE MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE, AND HOW TO STRENGTHEN NATO PROGRAMMING AND FOLLOW-THROUGH MACHINERY TO HELP ENSURE THIS CONCRETE RESULT.

IF WE MINISTERS CAN AGREE ON BROAD OUTLINES OF THIS EXERCISE AT OUR MAY MEETING, THEN THE PERMREPS COULD PROMPTLY DEVELOP A WORK PROGRAM. THE WHOLE EXERCISE COULD BE CONDUCTED BY EXISTING NATO ORGANIZATIONS WITH REPORTS TO THE DPC BY OUR SPRING 1978 MEETING.

IN ADDITION, I WILL PROBABLY PROPOSE TWO OR THREE MODEST SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES BASED ON SACEUR'S RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE HIGH PRIORITY AREAS OF ANTIARMOR, WAR RESERVE

MUNITIONS, AND READINESS. THEIR OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO IMPART A SENSE OF EARLY FORWARD MOVEMENT TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF NATO'S CONVENTIONAL FORCE READINESS, A SENSE THAT WOULD BE ABSENT IF WE WERE ONLY "TO STUDY" A LONG TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM. THEY WOULD NOT LIKELY IMPACT VERY MUCH ON THE FRG SPECIFICALLY, SINCE YOU ARE WELL AHEAD OF MOST OF THE OTHER ALLIES IN THESE AREAS. I HOPE YOU CAN JOIN ME IN SUPPORTING THESE INITIATIVES AS WELL.

I AM SENDING AMBASSADOR KOMER, WHOM YOU MET HERE, TO BRIEF THE NATO PERMREPS DURING THE FIRST WEEK IN MAY. IF YOU THINK IT USEFUL, I COULD HAVE HIM STOP OFF

BRIEFLY IN BONN JUST BEFOREHAND TO LAY OUT MY THINKING MORE FULLY.

I KNOW THAT YOU AND I THINK ALIKE ABOUT THE URGENT NEED
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TO STRENGTHEN NATO'S DETERRENT/DEFENSE POSTURE AT A COST LEVEL THAT WE CAN SUSTAIN POLITICALLY. THIS LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM COULD BE A MAJOR STEP FORWARD TO THIS END. I WILL BE SENDING A MESSAGE TO ALL MOD'S ON THESE MATTERS SHORTLY, BUT I WANTED TO PARTICULARLY SOLICIT YOUR SUPPORT IN ADVANCE.

WARM REGARDS, HAROLD.

3. FYI: IF FRG RESPONSE FAVORABLE, AMBASSADOR KOMER COULD COME TO BONN, TUESDAY, MAY 3, THOUGH MUST LEAVE EARLY TO BRIEF PERMREPS IN BRUSSELS. APPOINTMENTS WITH STUTZLE AND BRANDT DESIRABLE, BUT NOT NECESSARY SEE LEBER UNLESS LATTER SO REQUESTS. END FYI.

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